



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS


STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2016 THROUGH FY2020
SERVING THE CONGRESS AND THE NATION



INTRODUCTION

To effectively position itself for the future and prepare for its new leadership, the Library of Congress has developed an open, agile and flexible five-year strategic plan for the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.



*“Let us tenderly and kindly
cherish therefore, the means of
knowledge. Let us dare to read,
think, speak, and write.”* - JOHN ADAMS

The background of the entire page is a photograph of the interior of Thomas Jefferson's Library. The image shows a grand, circular room with a high, ornate ceiling featuring a repeating diamond pattern of gold and brown. The walls are lined with tall, dark wood bookshelves filled with books. In the center, there is a small table with a tablet on it. The floor is covered in a patterned carpet with geometric and floral motifs in shades of yellow, brown, and white. The lighting is warm and focused on the bookshelves.

“There is in fact no subject to which a member of Congress may not have occasion to refer.” - THOMAS JEFFERSON

During the development of this plan, the Library considered major strategic directions taken in its first two centuries that informed the strategic context for its third century. Analysis of the Library’s major motivating factors and its resulting actions reveal the following broad management strategies:

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Library of Congress was created to provide members of Congress with access to information in support of their law-making activities. Access to up-to-date knowledge on all subjects animated the universal collection advocated by Thomas Jefferson, whose personal library was acquired by the Congress and became the cornerstone of the reconstituted Library after the War of 1812. After the Civil War, the copyright function was placed within the Library to facilitate the acquisition of more American materials.

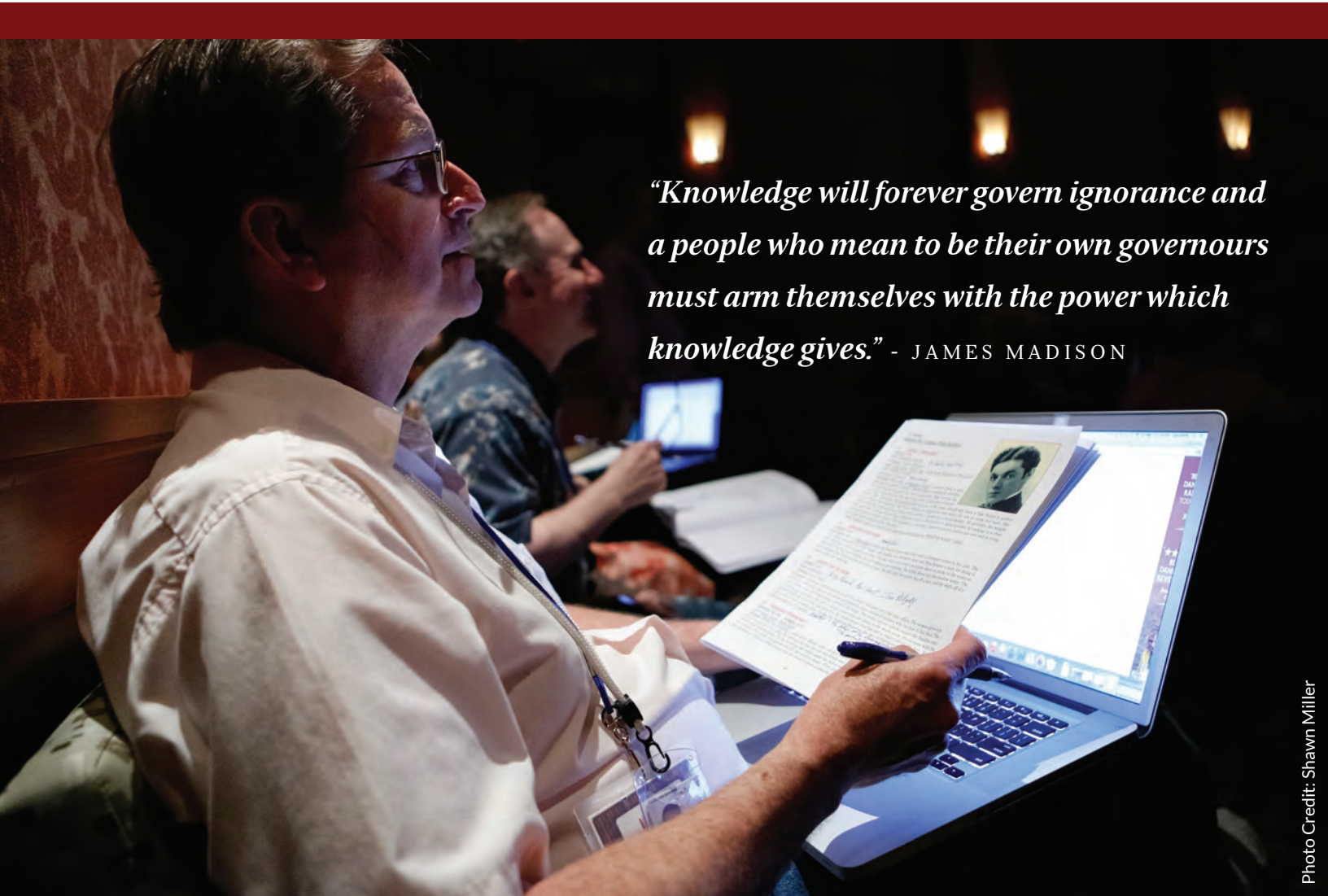
During the twentieth century, America assumed a greater role as an industrial, military and diplomatic power and asserted a greater leadership role within the constellation of libraries across the nation. In response, the Library dramatically increased its acquisition of books and other materials that were created outside the United States and presented in hundreds of languages. In concert with this broadening of its collections, the Library developed efficient new ways to organize and access this disparate knowledge, particularly in light of Congress's increased focus on pressing global matters.

Now, in the twenty-first century, new technologies have ushered in an era of interconnectivity, characterized by instantaneous communication and information-sharing on a global basis. The Library's collections and services are available to a rapidly increasing number of networked individuals across the country and throughout the world. This knowledge must be able to travel across a multiplicity of systems and sources. In order to effectively share knowledge and meet the growing demand for collaboration, accessing information in real time, immediately, easily, and globally is crucial.



Online search showing Library of Congress collections

From fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2020, the Library of Congress will continue to serve members of Congress, all other Americans, and researchers worldwide by providing access to collections, staff expertise, programs and other resources that will assist their decision making and enrich their lives in a variety of ways.



“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance and a people who mean to be their own governours must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.” - JAMES MADISON

Larry Smith, a processing technician with the Moving Image Section, helps identify early silent films during the “Mostly Lost” film festival at the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center (Packard Campus) theater.

This plan will be accomplished through the following means:

- acquiring, cataloging, preserving and providing access to high-quality collections;
- deploying state-of-the-industry technology;
- employing management best practices;
- creating a learning environment to retain and motivate a highly qualified staff;
- sharing knowledge through online resources, public programs and publications; and
- engaging in collaboration with institutional peers and new partners around the world in order to share collections, resources, and expertise.



Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

The African and Middle Eastern Division and the Humanities and Social Sciences Division, in cooperation with Juneteenth Book Festival, Inc., present a symposium exploring the topics of literature, literacy and the creative arts in the African Diaspora to mark the 150th anniversary of the Juneteenth observance, June 19, 2015.



Photo Credit: Lina Dutky

Judy Dixon and Neil Bernstein of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped demonstrate the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) application for mobile devices.



Photo Credit: Abby Brack Lewis

Film preservation specialist John Carter views a film at the Library's National Audio-Visual Conservation Center (Packard Campus).



PROCESS

This strategic plan was developed following reflection on the Library's role and activities, analysis of a variety of reports and recommendations that identified key challenges to a viable future for the Library, feedback from key constituents and staff, and the analysis of internal usage metrics.

FIRST, the core functions of the Library were considered.

SECOND, several key reports were analyzed [See Appendix 1]. This plan takes into account many of the valuable observations and recommendations contained in these recent documents.

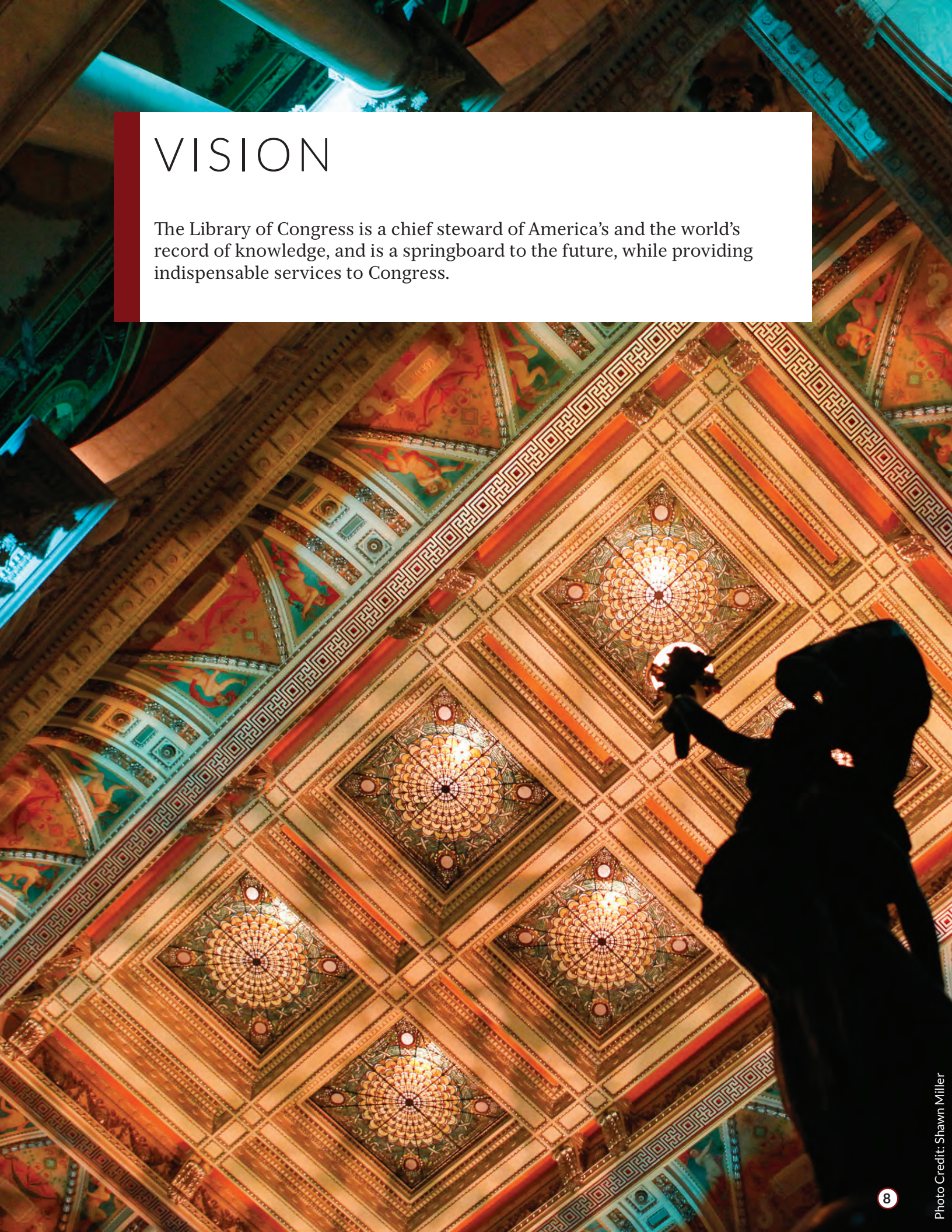
THIRD, a number of strategic plans created by other entities were studied. These were the plans of institutions in two categories: (1) libraries and other cultural institutions worldwide, and (2) government entities that have been strongly affected by technological change.

FOURTH, representatives of the Library's component parts (service units) consolidated information about their units' core functions and future plans for the purpose of providing a strategic overview for the 2016 through 2020 time period.

The findings developed for the Library's strategic plan rely heavily on all these sources of current data.

VISION

The Library of Congress is a chief steward of America's and the world's record of knowledge, and is a springboard to the future, while providing indispensable services to Congress.



MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to provide Congress, and then the federal government, and the American people with a rich, diverse, and enduring source of knowledge that can be relied upon to inform, inspire, and engage them, and support their intellectual and creative endeavors.



A U.S. Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera at the Library of Congress National Book Festival.
(Photo Credit: Shawn Miller)

B Children work on "Yertle the Turtle" coloring activities during a Read Across America event at the Young Readers Center.
(Photo Credit: Shawn Miller)

C Comedian Jerry Lewis, who donated his papers to the Library in 2015.
(Photo Credit: Robert Maxwell)

D Two staff members of the Law Library confer.
(Photo Credit: Abby Brack Lewis)

E The Library's Congress.gov legislative information system is accessible on mobile devices.
(Photo Credit: Abby Brack Lewis)

F Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song honoring Billy Joel at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, DC.
(Photo Credit: John Harrington)

VALUES

Paramount among the Library's values are the following:

- To fulfill President Madison's conviction that access to accurate, authentic, and non-partisan information is essential to a democratic society.
- To underscore the fundamental importance of literacy for all Americans, an asset that has a monumental impact on the welfare and prosperity of the nation as a whole.
- To demonstrate integrity by treating everyone with fairness and equality, being transparent in decision making, upholding democratic principles, and being open to new ideas.
- To uphold trust and confidentiality.
- To communicate clearly.
- To provide high-quality service to everyone who uses the Library's resources.
- To capitalize upon collaborations.
- To leverage the strength of diversity in the Library's staff, collections, and constituents.
- To be bold, innovative and willing to take risks.



Library staff celebrating a colleague's accomplishment.

CORE FUNCTIONS

The Library's mission and values manifest themselves in the collections, the products and the services it provides to Congress, the government, and the American people. The following list comprises the core functions of the Library:

- Provide unique research and reference services to the Congress and to users who visit the Library in person, via the Internet, and by other modes of communication.
- Acquire, describe, make accessible, secure, and preserve a universal collection of knowledge in physical and electronic formats, and obtain electronic access, for its own users, to digital materials held by other entities.
- Support the statutory responsibilities of the U.S. Copyright Office in administering the copyright laws, providing expertise on questions of law and policy, and serving the public good.
- Empower the workforce by creating a culture of learning, providing appropriate technology and devising effective workflows.
- Demonstrate the scope and value of Library collections, staff expertise, and resulting scholarship through a variety of public programs, publications and online presentations.
- Innovate scientific testing of materials and practices that relate to the conservation and preservation of collection materials.
- Articulate and exemplify library and information science best practices and be a national and international role model for all libraries.



Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) views the Library's Civil Rights Act of 1964 exhibition.



Julie Biggs, senior paper conservator with the Conservation Division, examines pages of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address under a stereo microscope.

STRATEGIES

The Library's strategic plan comprises seven strategies:

1 SERVICE



Deliver authoritative, authentic, and non-partisan research, analysis and information, first and foremost, to the Congress, to the federal government, and to the American people.

2 COLLECTIONS



Acquire, describe, preserve, secure, and provide access to a universal collection of knowledge, and the record of America's creativity.

3 CREATIVITY



Work with the U.S. Copyright Office to develop modernized copyrights systems and practices, in accordance with copyright laws and public objectives.

4 COLLABORATION



Stimulate and support research, innovation, and life-long learning through direct outreach and through national and global collaborations.

5 EMPOWERMENT



Empower the workforce for maximum performance.

6 TECHNOLOGY



Deploy a dynamic, state-of-the-industry technology infrastructure that follows best practices and standards.

7 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Organize and manage the Library to facilitate change and adopt new methods to fulfill its mission.

Photo Credits:

1 - Shawn Miller

2 - Shawn Miller

3- Amanda Reynolds

4- Amanda Reynolds

5 - Shawn Miller

6 - Abby Brack Lewis

7 - Shawn Miller

THE KEY COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The enactment of the Library's strategic plan for fiscal years 2016 through 2020 has three key components: a strategic overview, annual budgets and Congressional Budget Justifications (CBJ), and the implementation plan, which incorporates annual performance goals and targets.

Strategic Overview

Preceding the implementation of this strategic plan, five key actions were taken in fiscal year 2015 to position the Library for new leadership.

The Library executed a major organizational realignment of programs and operations that had the goal of strengthening information technology and other support functions; elevating outreach work; integrating digital and analog collection management; and providing a stronger support structure that will better serve the Library's constituents. Under the realignment, a new service unit was established—National and International Outreach (NIO). This unit will manage the Library's scholarly, educational, and interpretive programs, as well as its national and international outreach programs and fee-for-service enterprises. [See Appendix 2]

Two high-level management positions were filled: the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The CIO takes over responsibility for information technology, web services and repository development, among other duties. Under the new COO, financial, fiduciary, and other key operational functions are nested together to achieve full accountability, derive the greatest value from every public dollar spent, and make optimal use of the Library's staff.

The Library's already existing Web Governance Board is nearing completion of a process to clearly articulate its priorities, including audiences, with respect to what the Library plans to accomplish on the Web.

The Library has built significant digital collections from unique, rare, disparate or not widely held materials selected primarily for their research value. As a result of this effort, Americans, as well as people around the world, benefit from access to the Library's unsurpassed collections. While the Library has been developing new workflows and increasing the number of channels to bring in and share the Library's digital collections, major challenges still remain to accomplish this critical task.

At all times in the Library's history, the issue of space for its critical collections has been of utmost concern. The Library continually seeks innovative solutions for the proper management of all its rich resources—those that are physical, those that are converted from analog to digital, and those that are born digital. Just as in the past, during the twenty-first century the Library must house and responsibly care for knowledge in new formats while knowledge it collects in existing formats continues to grow. As the Library enters fiscal year 2016, construction is beginning on a fifth storage module at Fort Meade, Maryland. This facility and others like it can reduce deterioration of the Library's collections, provide for better access, and help alleviate an urgent situation with the management of physical materials.

Annual Budgets and Congressional Budget Justifications (CBJ)

Any forward looking Library planning must take into account a multi-year expectation of scarce resources. The ability of the Library to deliver its anticipated outcomes will be affected by the overall federal fiscal environment. The Library will reinforce its core services while continuing to identify opportunities for efficiencies and cost avoidance among and within its programs. [[2016 Congressional Budget Justification](#)]

Implementation Plan

The implementation of the strategic plan for fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2020 will consist of a holistic approach that will position the Library to be an effective, responsive leader in the twenty-first century information environment.

In carrying out the fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2020 strategic plan, the Library will continue to entrust representatives of service units with the responsibility of monitoring the current year's performance targets and developing new targets for succeeding years. Because offering the most responsive service to its constituents is of foremost importance, the Library will collect and analyze data to evaluate its service. More metrics will be used to gauge performance, benchmark, and consider best practices among similar institutions. Finally, the Library will study key socio-economic trends and their potential effect upon its future.

The proposed plan has seven major strategies. Each strategy has outcomes that will help the Library determine its level of success, followed by required actions. Annual action plans will drive performance, with annual performance goals and targets.

Strategy 1

Deliver authoritative, authentic, and non-partisan research, analysis and information, first and foremost, to the Congress, to the federal government, and to the American people.

Outcome

Library products and services anticipate and align with congressional priorities and research needs, and staff expertise is deployed to best meet the expectations of Congress.

Action

Ensure that meeting congressional research and information needs is the highest priority among the Library's goals.

Outcome

The Library is user-focused and provides the highest quality of service when meeting current and future legislative information needs. Congress.gov is a principal vehicle for meeting the needs of Members, congressional staff, and the public.

Action

Maximize the Library's capacity to continuously assess and adapt to client needs, to support the secure delivery of unique products and services to the Congress, the federal government, and the American people.

Strategy 2

Acquire, describe, preserve, secure, and provide access to a universal collection of knowledge, and the record of America's creativity.

Outcome

Using varied methods of acquisitions available to the Library, research materials are made accessible to all, in preferred formats for immediate use and long-term viability.

Actions

- Strengthen policy statements to ensure that the Library acquires materials in preferred formats to meet the needs of Library users today and in the future.
- Develop and implement new systems to describe the Library collections to make them more widely accessible.
- Continue to aggressively address the insufficient and inadequate storage capacity for the Library's growing analog and digital collections.
- Expand the Library's repository services to support a diverse and growing digital collection program.

Strategy 2 - cont'd

Outcome

The Library's preservation and collection management programs are designed to ensure the current and future viability of collections in myriad formats.

Action

Employ state-of-the-art preservation techniques and invest in cutting-edge research and development.

Outcome

Constituents can access the Library's collections with assurance that privacy, security, and intellectual property protections are in place.

Actions

- Coordinate and prioritize Library-wide digitization efforts to satisfy the needs of constituents and preservation reformatting techniques, and the protection of rights holders.
- Acquire materials today to preserve them for future use while recognizing possible limitations on immediate access.
- Create new methods of bibliographic access to augment discovery of the Library's collections and the collections of other entities.
- Strengthen reference services and the ability to provide expert research services and tools to facilitate discovery of collections.
- Strengthen collections, programs and services for under-represented and under-served communities, including people who are blind or have a physical disability.

Outcome

The collections, regardless of format or location, are well accounted for and secure at all times.

Actions

- Augment the physical and networked security of the collections to ensure long-term access through improved integrated library services, collection management and inventory control systems.
- Advance an integrated continuity of operations capability in order to preserve, safeguard and make accessible collections and supporting systems to staff and constituents in a timely manner.



Movable shelving in the John Adams Building.

Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

Strategy 3

Work with the U.S. Copyright Office to develop modernized copyrights systems and practices, in accordance with copyright laws and public objectives.

Outcome

The Library fully supports the statutory responsibilities of the Register of Copyrights to administer the copyright laws effectively, efficiently and skillfully for the benefit of authors and the public good.

Actions

- Support the modernization objectives of the U.S. Copyright Office with respect to technology systems and infrastructure, copyright registration services, and the accuracy, timeliness and searchability of public copyright records.
- Assure the effective sharing of data between the Library and the U.S. Copyright Office, and the smooth transfer of the copyright deposits most critical to the Library's collections for current and future use.

Strategy 4

Stimulate and support research, innovation, and life-long learning through direct outreach and through national and global collaborations.

Outcome

The Library is fully engaged as a leader or active participant in national and international partnerships that pursue shared goals for access to dispersed knowledge and expertise.

Actions

- Promote life-long learning through national and international programs.
- Expand online content, programming, and the use of social media to increase engagement with collections and support digital initiatives worldwide.
- Improve cost-recovery programs to serve diverse clienteles.



The 13th Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, the Law Librarian of Congress David Mao, and The Princess Royal, Princess Anne open the exhibition, *Magna Carta: Muse and Mentor* at the Library of Congress. Photo Credit: John Harrington



Rick Atkinson speaks during a presentation on "The Human Side of War" at the 15th annual National Book Festival. Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

Strategy 4 - cont'd

Outcome

The Library celebrates literacy, innovation, scholarship and civic engagement.

Actions

- Strengthen the Library's role in documenting and disseminating information about America's cultural heritage, including its democratic values and tradition of creativity.
- Showcase the Library's magnificent physical space by focusing on constituents, both on-site and off-site, to inspire engagement and active participation in the role of the Library in American life.

Strategy 5

Empower the workforce for maximum performance.

Outcome

The Library fosters a culture of learning that motivates staff to obtain new skills.

Actions

- Recruit, hire, develop, manage and retain a skilled and diverse workforce for the future; provide the proper equipment, environment and support to enable staff to perform at maximum capacity.
- Design a workforce performance management process that facilitates a results-oriented, high-performance culture.
- Promote training and career development, and provide mechanisms for effective leadership development, knowledge transfer, succession planning, and flexible deployment of the workforce.



The 2015 Junior Fellows showcase items they worked with during their 10-week internships.
Photo Credit: Shawn Miller



The 13th Librarian of Congress James H. Billington greets employees during an all-staff open house.
Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

Strategy 6

Deploy a dynamic, state-of-the-industry technology infrastructure that follows best practices and standards.

Outcome

The Library's IT infrastructure and governance play a foundational and critical role in the Library's mission and enterprise performance by proactively managing, monitoring and sustaining IT resources.

Actions

- Harmonize systems across the Library that provide technical support for everyday operations, as well as any situation that affects continuity of operations, including threats to IT security.
- Develop appropriate equipment and access policies for the workforce and Library constituents that are not dependent upon location, that comply with security requirements and protect intellectual property.
- Provide technology that enables access to all Library materials for individuals who are blind or have a physical disability, and other communities with specialized needs.
- Employ appropriate governance structures that ensure accountability, efficiency and coordination in the Library's IT investments.



Presentation by Zuhair Mahmoud and Sheryl Rush at the Assistive Technology Demonstration Center, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

Strategy 7

Organize and manage the Library to facilitate change and adopt new methods to fulfill its mission.

Outcome

Library-wide organizational performance management processes directly align with strategies.

Action

Improve governance processes, communication and transparency, and accountability to maximize program effectiveness, mitigate risks and potential waste, and identify new opportunities through analysis of trends and emerging patterns.

Outcome

The infrastructure and supporting governance processes enable the Library's leadership to manage and fulfill the Library's mission in an environment of scarce resources.

Actions

- Pursue a decision-making process based on data collection and analysis that optimizes infrastructure-resource allocation and the use of physical and virtual space to support the Library's mission.
- Seek input on a continuous basis to inform planning and program initiatives for the Library.
- Increase the use of shared services within the Library and among legislative branch agencies.
- Streamline Library-wide standard operating procedures and internal regulations to align with industry best practices and meet constituent needs.



Photo Credit: Shawn Miller

*“Our greatest legacy to future generations,
in addition to avoiding wars and conflicts,
may be building knowledge-based societies
and accelerating expansion of scientific
knowledge and useful technologies.”*

- WILLIAM COLGLAZIER

“Sustainable Development Agenda: 2030,” *Science*, Sept. 4, 2015, p. 1050.

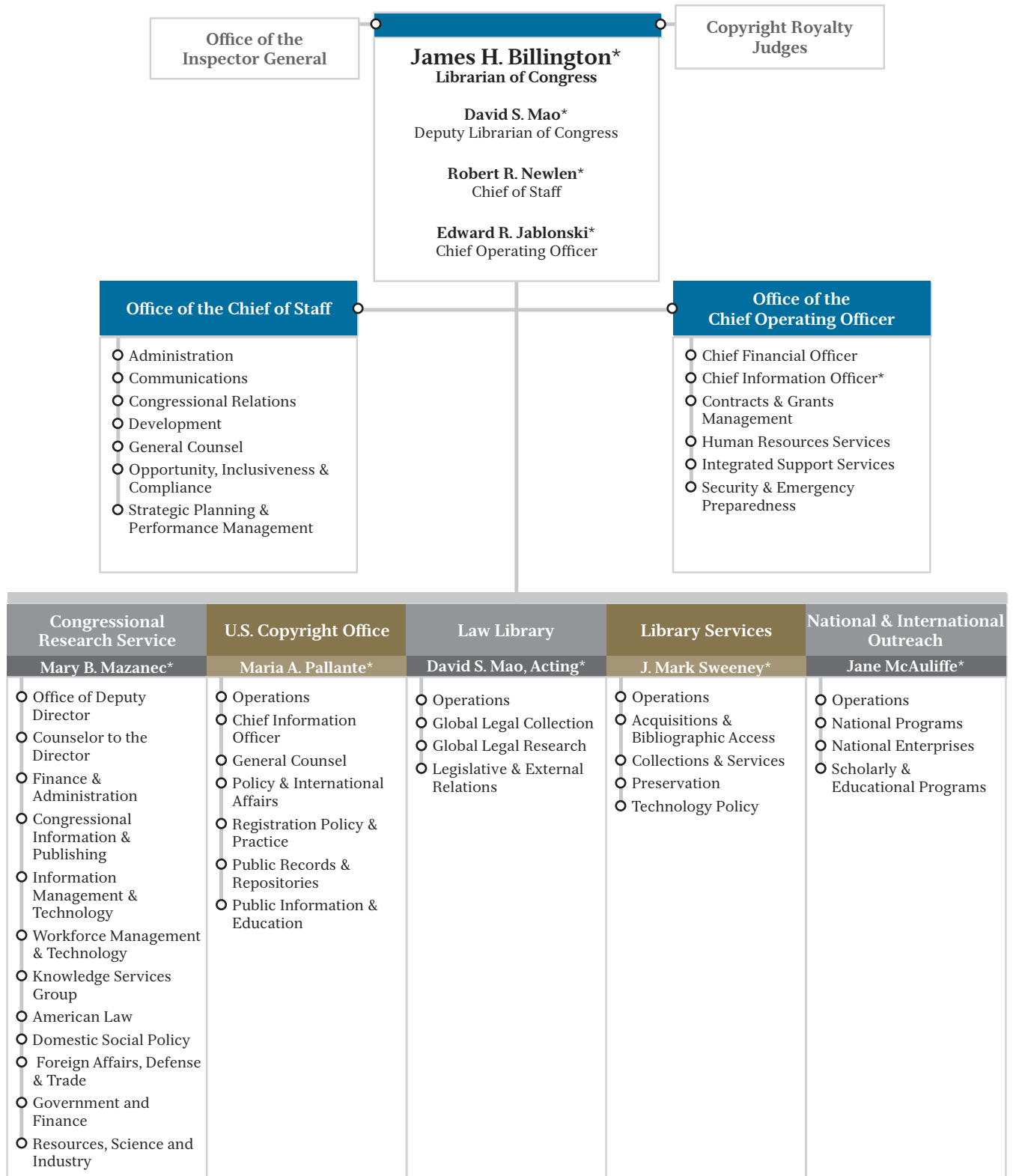


APPENDIX 1: REPORTS ANALYZED FOR STRATEGIC PLAN

- GAO Report—Library of Congress: Strong Leadership Needed to Address Serious Information Technology Management Weaknesses, GAO-15-315; March 31, 2015.
- GAO Report—Information Technology: Copyright Office Needs to Develop Plans that Address Technical and Organizational Challenges, GAO-15-338; March 31, 2015.
- The Library of Congress Office of the Inspector General Semiannual Report to the Congress, September 2014.
- The Library of Congress Office of the Inspector General Semiannual Report to the Congress, March 2015.
- Library of Congress, OIC, MYAEPP: Multi-Year Affirmative Employment Program Plan, Fiscal Year 2011-2016.
- Library of Congress, Library Services, Digital Collections Coordinating Committee (DC3) Report, March 31, 2014.
- Library of Congress, Library Services, DC3 Digital Acquisitions and Content Management Survey Report, October 28, 2014.
- Statement of Dr. James H. Billington, The Librarian of Congress, before the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Fiscal 2015, April 8, 2014.
- Statement of Dr. James H. Billington, The Librarian of Congress, before the Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Fiscal 2016, March 17, 2015.
- Statement of Dr. James H. Billington, The Librarian of Congress, before the Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Fiscal 2015 Budget Request, March 5, 2014.
- Statement of Dr. James H. Billington, The Librarian of Congress, before the Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Fiscal 2016 Budget Request, February 26, 2015.
- Findings and recommendations by the Library’s “Futures Programs” teams.
- “Digital Collecting Strategy,” initial framework draft. Library of Congress. September 2015.
- Previous strategic plans of the Library of Congress.

APPENDIX 2

Library of Congress Organization Chart (as of September 30, 2015)





A Michael Romano, a WWII veteran, submits a series of photographs to the Veterans History Project as director Bob Patrick looks on. (Photo Credit: Library of Congress)

B David Rubenstein, right, opens "The Human Side of War" program with an interview with author and former NBC Nightly News anchor Tom Brokaw during the National Book Festival. (Photo Credit: Shawn Miller)

C CRS specialist Walter Oleszek (at left) moderates a discussion with former U.S. Representatives Dan Lungren and David Obey, and former U.S. Senators Trent Lott and Paul Sarbanes during a conference to mark the CRS centennial. (Photo Credit: Amanda Reynolds)

D Former associates of Rosa Parks meet with the 13th Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. (Photo Credit: Shawn Miller)

E Maria Pallante, Register of Copyrights, testifies before the 113th Congress House Judiciary Committee Hearing: The Register's Call for Updates to U.S. Copyright Law. (Photo Credit: Cecilia Rogers)

F Rep. Gregg Harper (R-MS) speaks at a luncheon celebrating the 2014 Gershwin Prize honoree, Billy Joel, in the Members Room of the Library of Congress. (Photo Credit: Amanda Reynolds)

G David Mao, Law Librarian of Congress, hosts a conversation with John G. Roberts, Jr., Chief Justice of the United States and The Rt. Hon. the Lord Judge, former Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, on the legal legacy of the Magna Carta, in conjunction with the Magna Carta exhibition at the Library of Congress. (Photo Credit: Amanda Reynolds)

H Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel speaking on the occasion of the Library's receipt of the 1507 Waldseemüller map. (Photo Credit: Library of Congress)



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